

## THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL'S COURT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

### **PURPOSE**

The Court Operations Committee will address matters related to the efficient operations of the courts and assist in the development of consistent state-wide operations policies and best practices.

### **SCOPE OF ACTIVITY**

The Committee's activities will encompass a wide variety of operations within the court system, utilizing a number of focused subcommittees and, as necessary, workgroups. The Committee will oversee and approve the work of the subcommittees and workgroups. The subcommittees are: Jury Use and Management, Court Forms, Case Management, and Courthouse Equity. Various workgroups will meet on an *ad hoc* basis and report directly to the Committee. The workgroups will address such issues as: grants, expungements, court reporters, record retention and other issues deemed appropriate. The Committee, its subcommittees and workgroups will collaborate with other Judicial Council committees as necessary. One of the Committee's goals is to establish better communication between the different levels of the court system to achieve an enhanced coordination of policies and procedures within the judiciary.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

*Honorable E. Gregory Wells, Chair*  
Circuit Court for Calvert County

<b>NAME</b>	<b>TERM</b>
Hon. Shannon Avery, Circuit Court, Baltimore City	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015
Hon. Daneeka L. Cotton, Circuit Court Prince George's County	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016
Hon. Lawrence R. Daniels ( <i>Retired</i> )	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015
Hon. James R. Eyler, Court of Special Appeals	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015
Hon. Lawrence Fletcher-Hill, Circuit Court, Baltimore City	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016
Hon. Lenore R. Gelfman, Circuit Court, Howard County	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016
Hon. Robin Gill Bright, District Court, Prince George's County	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016
Hon. Joan B. Gordon, District Court, Baltimore City	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016
Family Magistrate Zakia Mahasa, Baltimore City	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016
Hon. William D. Missouri, Jr. ( <i>Retired</i> )	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015
Hon. Emory Plitt ( <i>Retired</i> )	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015
Hon. Michael W. Reed, Court of Special Appeals	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016
Hon. J. Michael Wachs, Circuit Court Anne Arundel County	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016
Hon. Alan Wilner ( <i>Retired</i> )	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015
Hon. Brett Wilson, Circuit Court, Dorchester County	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016
Hon. Ricardo Zwaig, District Court, Howard County	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015
Hon. Donald B. Sealing, II, Circuit Court, Carroll County	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016
Hon. Kathy P. Smith, Circuit Court, Calvert County	January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015

Sandra Smith, Circuit Court, Queen Anne's County  
Polly Harding, Executive Director, District Court

January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016  
January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016

Faye Matthews, *Staff*

## **SUBCOMMITTEES**

### **NAME: JURY USE AND MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

#### **NATURE AND PURPOSE**

This subcommittee will focus on examining the policies and procedures used in the various circuit courts. Among other things, it will explore the feasibility of developing a jury manual for use state-wide, focusing on best practices from judges and jury commissioners from each circuit. The subcommittee will also examine such topics as: juror seating during *voir dire* (practices vary widely), the "generous juror program," the feasibility of on-line juror qualifications in each county, and courtroom access for disabled jurors.

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

Hon. Lawrence Fletcher-Hill, *Chair*  
Hon. Lawrence r. Daniels  
Hon. Michael Wachs  
Sandra K. Dalton  
Sandra Smith  
Nwamaka Anowi  
Kelly Mullins  
Joan Williams  
Anne SanGiovanni  
Lavinia Alexander  
Ann Looker

Veronica Jones, *Staff*

#### **ANTICIPATED WORK PRODUCT**

A comprehensive juror manual to ensure uniformity throughout the State will be developed. The goal is an e-book that is easily accessible to judges, court personnel, and the public. The subcommittee might consider updating the on-line juror orientation videos, the grand jury handbook, and jury brochures. The subcommittee may be called on to make specific recommendations to the Judicial Council about the best use of judicial and financial resources.

#### **EXPECTED DURATION**

Indefinite.

**NAME: FORMS SUBCOMMITTEE****NATURE AND PURPOSE**

The subcommittee will be tasked with reviewing and, if necessary, offering suggestions for modifying the various forms used in the District and Circuit Courts, as well as those created and modified by the various Judicial Council committees. It is hoped that the subcommittee will eliminate any inconsistencies between forms in the trial courts and promote standardization, where possible, throughout the jurisdictions. The subcommittee will collaborate with the Court Access and Community Relations Committee to evaluate the usefulness of certain forms being written in a language other than English (e.g. domestic violence forms). The subcommittee may also examine how frequently the public uses the on-line forms and, if necessary, review and suggest changes to the on-line instructions.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Hon. Robin D. Gill Bright, *Chair*  
Hon. Shannon E. Avery  
Connie Kratovil-Lavelle, Esq.  
Jennifer Moore  
Hope G. Gary, Esq.  
Amy Craig  
Barbara Meiklejohn  
Mary K. Smith  
Douglas Hofstedt  
Carla Jones

Polly Harding, *Staff*

**ANTICIPATED WORK PRODUCT**

It is anticipated that the subcommittee will review modifications to existing and newly proposed forms, including electronic forms. As necessary, the subcommittee will recommend new forms to improve operational efficiencies within the courts. The subcommittee will examine the current Forms Index available to court personnel and the public. The subcommittee may also wish to work with the appropriate Judicial Council committee to develop uniform standards and policies with regard to certain forms, such as the waiver of pre-payment of filing fees, emergency custody pleadings forms, domestic violence/peace order forms and the judges' worksheets.

**EXPECTED DURATION**

Indefinite.

**NAME: CASE MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

**NATURE AND PURPOSE**

This subcommittee will review and offer recommendations to the Committee and others deemed necessary and appropriate regarding issues arising from the implementation of Differentiated Case Management (DCM), including what events effect case time standards. The subcommittee also will review the extent to which specialty courts and/or dockets impact the ability to achieve established case time standards. The subcommittee may offer recommendations regarding compliance with DCM policies, soliciting input from court administrators and other pertinent court staff. The subcommittee will develop best practices in case management for distribution to the courts.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Hon. John W. Debelius, *Chair*  
Hon. JoAnn Ellinghaus-Jones  
Hon. Kathy P. Smith  
Hon. Dennis Weaver  
Rose Day  
Mary J. Abrams  
Roberta L. Warnken  
Timothy Sheridan  
Jennifer R. Keiser  
Pamela Q. Harris  
Faye D. Matthews

Andrew Ginder, *Staff*  
Dominique Johnigan, *Staff*

**ANTICIPATED WORK PRODUCT**

The subcommittee will recommend guidelines for monitoring compliance with DCM across the various levels of the judiciary. The subcommittee will review how to optimize utilization of the various case management systems to obtain reports and other tools that will assist judges, magistrates and other court staff effectively manage cases. The subcommittee will develop best practices in case management.

**EXPECTED DURATION**

Indefinite.

**NAME: COURTHOUSE EQUITY SUBCOMMITTEE**

**NATURE AND PURPOSE**

This subcommittee will work to ensure equitable distribution of resources across the judiciary through the recommendation of guidelines for fairly distributing State resources.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Hon. Brett W. Wilson, *Chair*  
Hon. Lenore R. Gelfman  
Pamela Q. Harris  
Lou Gieszl  
Faye D. Matthews  
Richard H. Outten  
Stephanie Medina  
Allen Clark, III

**ANTICIPATED WORK PRODUCT**

This subcommittee will establish policies and a set of guidelines reflecting an equitable allocation of resources across the State.

**EXPECTED DURATION**

Indefinite.

**WORKGROUPS**

**NAME: GRANT ADVISORY WORKGROUP**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this workgroup will be to advise the Committee and ultimately the courts about grant opportunities within, as well as outside the judiciary. Another goal will be to maintain a database of such grants, as well as identify and set guidelines for grant writers.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Hon. Ricardo Zwaig, *Chair*  
Hon. Alison L. Asti  
Michael Dunston  
Gray Barton  
Lynne Kelleher

Tracy Watkins-Tribbitt  
Lou Gieszl  
Sondra Battle  
Gisela Blades  
Allen Clark, III  
Melinda Jensen

Alecia Parker, *Staff*

## **ANTICIPATED WORK PRODUCT**

The workgroup will endeavor to establish a database of available grants, as well as conduct a semi-annual review of available grants and disseminate that information to relevant court personnel. The workgroup also will develop guidelines for applying for internal and external grants, as well as for technical assistance.

## **EXPECTED DURATION**

The workgroup will meet on an *ad hoc* basis.

## **NAME: COURT REPORTING WORKGROUP**

## **PURPOSE**

This workgroup shall set policies for court reporters in the circuit courts. The workgroup will evaluate the quality of court reporting across the counties. The workgroup will also report on the integration of MDEC and other technologies and their effects on court reporting.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Hon. Marjorie L. Clagett, *Chair*  
Hon. Michael W. Reed  
Bev Miller  
Teri Scherer  
Derrick Lowe  
Stakeholder representatives (to be determined)  
  
Greg Hilton, *Staff*

## **ANTICIPATED WORK PRODUCT**

A revised Manual for Court Reporting.

## **EXPECTED DURATION**

This workgroup will meet on an *ad hoc* basis.

**NAME: EXPUNGEMENT WORKGROUP**

## **PURPOSE**

This workgroup will review current policies, as well as legislative and rules changes regarding expungements and continue to make recommendations to the Committee regarding future policies. It might be advisable for this workgroup to work with State's Attorney's Offices and Court Clerk's Offices throughout the State to establish consistent expungement policies.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Hon. Daneeka L. Cotton  
Regina Sargent  
Kathy Webster  
Barbara Meiklejohn  
Markisha Gross  
Jacqueline Johnson  
Patti Allen  
Latonia McKnight  
Kristina Ivins  
Sue Mozingo

Dominique Johnigan, *Staff*

Non-Judiciary justice partners as necessary and appropriate

## **ANTICIPATED WORK PRODUCT**

It is anticipated that this workgroup will develop a set of guidelines to establish a uniform expungement policy and occasionally review the courts' compliance with the same.

**EXPECTED DURATION**

This workgroup would meet on an *ad hoc* basis.

**NAME: RECORDS RETENTION WORKGROUP****PURPOSE**

This workgroup will review the record retention schedules and recommend necessary modifications. This workgroup also will work with the Maryland State Archives to develop guidelines for properly preparing records for transfer and storage.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Hon. James R. Eyler  
Dennis Weaver  
Dawne Lindsey  
Amy Bosley  
Nicole DiFonzo  
Maria Fields  
Melinda Jensen  
Jennifer Keiser

**ANTICIPATED WORK PRODUCT**

It is anticipated that the Record Retention Workgroup would promulgate a set of guidelines to ensure the courts' compliance with the record retention schedules.

**EXPECTED DURATION**

To meet on an *ad hoc* basis.

**NAME: LEGISLATIVE REVIEW WORKGROUP****PURPOSE**

This workgroup provides commentary, input, and testimony as needed to assist the Legislative Committee in its review of legislative initiatives in areas affecting the operations of the courts that are under the purview of the Court Operations Committee.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Hon. Alan M. Wilner, *Chair*



Hon. William D. Missouri, Jr.  
Hon. Joan B. Gordon  
Hon. E. Gregory Wells  
Family Magistrate Zakia Mahasa

### **ANTICIPATED WORK PRODUCT**

This workgroup will provide input to the Legislative Committee concerning proposed legislation in the court operations arena. This group will also assist in providing testimony or commentary, upon request from the Legislative Committee, regarding the same.

### **EXPECTED DURATION**

90 days (January – April)